

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. A method of allowing users of an application program to manage add-ons associated with the application program, comprising:

generating a user interface that identifies add-ons associated with an application program and responds to user input for managing the enable/disable state of said add-ons; and

in response to user input, managing the enable/disable state of said add-ons.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein said add-ons are chosen from the group comprising ActiveX® controls, browser helper objects, and toolbar extensions.

3. The method of Claim 1, wherein said add-ons include ActiveX® controls, and wherein the method further comprises updating said ActiveX® controls, in response to user input.

4. The method of Claim 1, wherein at least some of said add-ons are included in an explicit list of administrator-denied add-ons, and wherein the method further comprises prohibiting the enablement of said administrator-denied add-ons in response to user input.

5. The method of Claim 1, wherein at least some of said add-ons are included in an explicit list of administrator-approved add-ons, and wherein the method further comprises allowing the disablement of said administrator-approved add-ons in response to user input.

6. The method of Claim 1, wherein an administrator of the application program has the capacity to disable a user's ability to manage the add-ons.

7. The method of Claim 1, wherein said user interface identifies add-ons by displaying information selected from the group comprising the name of the add-on, the publisher of the add-on, the status of the add-on, the type of add-on, and the time when the add-on was lastly accessed.

8. The method of Claim 1, wherein said user interface includes at least one list of add-ons chosen from the group of lists comprising add-ons that have been used by the application program, add-ons currently loaded for use with the application program, and add-ons currently blocked for use with the application program.

9. A computer-readable medium containing computer-executable instructions for performing steps of a method of allowing users of an application program to manage add-ons associated with the application program, the method comprising:

generating a user interface that identifies add-ons associated with an application program and responds to user input for managing the enable/disable state of said add-ons; and

in response to user input, managing the enable/disable state of said add-ons.

10. The computer-readable medium of Claim 9, wherein said add-ons are chosen from the group comprising ActiveX® controls, browser helper objects, and toolbar extensions.

11. The computer-readable medium of Claim 9, wherein said add-ons include ActiveX® controls, and wherein the method further comprises updating said ActiveX® controls, in response to user input.

12. The computer-readable medium of Claim 9, wherein at least some of said add-ons are included in an explicit list of administrator-denied add-ons, and wherein the method further comprises prohibiting the enablement of said administrator-denied add-ons in response to user input.

13. The computer-readable medium of Claim 9, wherein at least some of said add-ons are included in an explicit list of administrator-approved add-ons, and wherein the method further comprises allowing the disablement of said administrator-approved add-ons in response to user input.

14. The computer-readable medium of Claim 9, wherein an administrator of the application program has the capacity to disable a user's ability to manage the add-ons.

15. The computer-readable medium of Claim 9, wherein said user interface identifies add-ons by displaying information selected from the group comprising the name of the add-on, the publisher of the add-on, the status of the add-on, the type of add-on, and the time when the add-on was lastly accessed.

16. The computer-readable medium of Claim 9, wherein said user interface includes at least one list of add-ons chosen from the group of lists comprising add-ons that have been used by the application program, add-ons currently loaded for use with the application program, and add-ons currently blocked for use with the application program.